

REMARKS

Claim 17 is canceled without prejudice or disclaimer. Claims 16, 18-47 and 56 are amended. Support for the claim amendments appears throughout the specification and claims as filed.

It is respectfully submitted that the present amendment presents no new issues or new matter and places this case in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the application in view of the above amendments and the following remarks is requested.

I. Examiner's Response to Amendment

The Examiner has maintained the withdrawal of claims 49 and 55¹ as drawn to a non-elected invention. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the withdrawal. Claims 49 and 55 depend from, and therefore include the limitations of, claim 16, and are therefore drawn to the elected invention.

II. The Rejection of the Claims under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 103

Claims 16-18, 35, 50 and 53-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as allegedly anticipated by Brode, USPN 6,475,765.

Claims 16-18, 27-28, 31-32, 40-42 and 51-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Brode, USPN 6,599,730 (hereinafter, "Brode '730") and Ness, USPN 6,902,922. Claims 16-18, 24, 29, 34, 42 and 51-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Brode '730 and Fano, USPN 6,727,085. Claims 16-18, 35-36, 38 and 51-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over the combination of Brode '730, and Weisgerber, USPN 6,566,115 (hereinafter "Weisgerber"). Claims 16-19, 25-26, 30-31, 33-34, 42, 46 and 51-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Brode '730 in view of Christianson, USPN 5,340,735. Claims 16-20, 22-24, 26, 30, 32, 37-39, 41-45, 47 and 50-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Brode '730, Gosselink, USPN 6,121,226 (hereinafter, "Gosselink") and any of Ballinger, USPN 5,741,664, USPN 5,780,285 or USPN 5,837,516 (hereinafter, "Ballinger") in view of Ghosh, USPN 6,376,450. Claims 16, 21-23, 25, 31-32, 34, 39, 42-43, 46, 50-54 and 56 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Brode '730, Gosselink and Ballinger in view of Aaslyng, USPN 5,665,587. Claims 16-18, 26, 37, 39, 41 and 50-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over

¹ The Office Action refers to claims 49 and 59. Applicants respectfully submit that claims 49 and 55 are intended.

Brode '730, Gosselink and Ballinger in view of Sierkstra, USPN 5,837,517. Claims 16-18, 28 and 50-54 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as allegedly obvious over Brode '730, Ballinger and Gosselink in view of Bott, USPN 5,700,676.

The anticipation and obviousness rejections are respectfully traversed.

The cited references disclose protease variants. However, none of the references disclose or suggest the protease variants in the amended claims herein.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicants submit that the amended claims overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. 102 and 35 U.S.C. 103. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections in view of the amendments herewith.

III. Conclusion

In view of the above, it is respectfully submitted that all claims are in condition for allowance. Early action to that end is respectfully requested. The Examiner is hereby invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if there are any questions concerning this amendment or application.

Should any additional fee(s) be due, the USPTO is authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 50-1701 of Novozymes North America, Inc.

Respectfully submitted,

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